

PROCEEDINGS OF THE BROWN COUNTY
ADMINISTRATION COMMITTEE

Pursuant to Section 19.84 Wis. Stats., a special meeting of the **Brown County Administration Committee** was held on Wednesday, August 19, 2015 in Room 210, Green Bay City Hall, 100 N. Jefferson Street, Green Bay, Wisconsin.

Present: Chair Fewell, Supervisor Schadewald, Supervisor Jamir, Supervisor Blom
Excused: Supervisor De Wane
Also Present: Supervisor Kaye, Supervisor Gruszynski, Supervisor Robinson, Supervisor La Violette, Kathy Pletcher, Brian Simons, Chad Weininger, other interested parties

I. Call to Order.

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Fewell at 6:30 p.m.

II. Approve/Modify Agenda.

Motion made by Supervisor Jamir, seconded by Supervisor Schadewald to approve the revised agenda.
Vote taken. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

Comments from the Public: None.

Library:

1. Resolution to Approve Funding for the Expansion of the Southwest Branch Library.

Supervisor Schadewald noted that there was a discussion at the last Ed and Rec Committee meeting regarding \$300,000 in the fund that was not spent the year before. Supervisor Gruszynski explained that there was a lot of discussion at the Ed and Rec meeting regarding where to take the money for the expansion from, and the original source of the \$300,000 is the reason it was not used. He continued that originally when that money was set aside, it was earmarked for Central Library. Gruszynski stated that Ed and Rec moved forward with taking the money from the general fund because they did not want to take from one library to pay for another. Schadewald asked what at Central the money was for. Director of Administration Chad Weininger stated that originally the money was levied for the repair of an elevator, but instead, the Board decided to bond for that amount so those levy dollars have been sitting there along with about another \$900,000 of bonding funds for future repairs to the Central Library. Weininger continued that as of this time the only repairs that have been done have been emergency or maintenance repairs to keep the building functioning up to code. Schadewald asked if the \$300,000 was tax levy dollars. Weininger responded that they were levy raised dollars that went into the fund to be there for the elevator at the Library but since the Board decided to bond instead, the levy dollars are still sitting there.

Gruszynski stated that although he cannot speak for everyone on the Ed and Rec Committee, the way some of them feel is that the Central Library is something that needs to be addressed and they do not want Southwest Branch to deter from what needs to be done at Central.

Fewell asked if there are still bonding funds and Weininger answered that there is \$900,000 in bonding funds along with the \$300,000. Fewell asked how long the bonding funds can sit and Weininger stated that they have asked bond counsel for an opinion on that as he felt that those funds should probably be expended by the end of the year. Weininger felt there had been a lot of discussions and no decisions as to what to do with the Central Library and he felt that this will need to be figured out in the next four months. Weininger continued that they intend to go out for RFP with an energy audit company as there

is some financing from savings available. This means that they could put money into the libraries and those dollars would be financed through energy savings.

Schadewald continued that it sounds like there is \$300,000 of tax levy dollars that the Ed and Rec Committee wants to hold onto because they anticipate using those funds at the Central Library and they want the expansion of the Southwest Branch taken out of the general fund. Schadewald asked Library Director Brian Simons what the anticipated use of the funds was. Simons stated that his understanding was that when the bond was taken out and the \$300,000 was pushed over from the library funds, it was during a process where a pre-design had been done and the bonding was taken out to move that on to the next step of design and execution of renovating the Central Library. Thereafter, work stopped and Public Works took over the fund and looked at what the safety things were that needed to be done and money was expended to address the items that could be addressed. Simons continued that the HVAC and other energy projects are somewhat of a Pandora's Box. He felt the reason this has not gone further is because Public Works felt that the available funds would not cover everything that needs to be done. Simons stated that the Library will be looking at getting some direction from the County Executive and the County Board on the future service vision of the Library. He stated that ideally they would like to get an architect to say how many square feet are needed so they are able to do things right, as opposed to fixing a building and then tearing it apart a few years later.

Schadewald agreed with what Simons said and said that he does support the expansion of the Southwest Branch but he is worried about what will happen in the future when more money is needed. The plan sounds to be that there is \$300,000 along with some bonding money and there is work to be done with the facility study. Once the Southwest Branch is expanded with a one-time expense from the general fund, Schadewald wonders if closing the branch will still be an issue every year. Simons responded that that is a good point and the way to frame this is that whether the Southwest Branch is expanded or not, there is a short-term issue going into 2016 with having enough funds to operate the entire nine branch system as is. With the budget proposed by the County Executive, there would have been a shortfall. Simons continued that the Library originally proposed a budget that said in order to come in on budget they would close the Southwest Branch. The County Executive did not want to see branch closures so he worked with Simons to come up with figures that allow the Southwest Branch to stay open for another year. Simons noted that the deficit was about \$160,000 and the intention was to approve that budget. Supervisors that represent constituents in the Southwest Branch service area spoke on behalf of their constituents and at that time the Library Board felt that it sounded like the Supervisors wanted the Library to approve the full deficit budget which was about \$330,000 and if those funds were acquired, the Southwest Branch could continue to operate with the expansion.

Schadewald asked about the ongoing cost of the addition. Simons responded that it would be \$17,000 more per year, but that has nothing to do with staff. The \$17,000 represents chargebacks from the Technology Services Department because they are adding computers. The \$17,000 figure also includes heating and cooling. Simons noted that they do not intend to increase staff.

Simons continued that the issue is not so much about the Southwest Branch but about the entire library system overall. He stated that closing the Southwest Branch would be the result of laying people off, because salary is the only spot left to save money. The majority of the Library operation is personnel. Simons continued that expanding or not expanding the Southwest Branch really is not the issue. The issue is that if the branch is kept open, the Library system will need funds to run it. Simons said that nobody likes to close a library but when you take the emotion out of it and you look at the usage data, it is the right business decision, even though it is a hard decision.

Supervisor La Violette felt that Simons has done an excellent job of explaining the situation. She continued that the Library system has been under funded for years. If it had been adequately funded we would not be having this discussion. She stated that although we are talking about the needs of the

Southwest Branch, there are eight other facilities and a very aging Bookmobile. She continued that she has talked to the President of the Village of Ashwaubenon and he is disgusted that the Library has not addressed the needs of the Ashwaubenon Branch as he feels it is totally inadequate to serve the residents of Ashwaubenon. La Violette noted that the Southwest Branch is in a poor area of town, but the near northeast side of Green Bay is the most poverty stricken area and she would be in favor of putting a library there. La Violette felt that limited money should be spent wisely and not doing a patch here and there. She felt that expanding the Southwest Branch may be the right thing to do, but she does not feel that all of the other things on the horizon have been looked at nor does she feel that how much the community is willing to spend on libraries has been looked at.

Supervisor Robinson asked if, regardless of the expansion of the Southwest Branch, the Library is going to be facing the question of closure next year and in future years if the optimum budget is not at the appropriate amount. He asked Simons if it would make sense to couple the support of an optimum budget with the expansion of the Southwest Branch. Library Board President Kathy Pletcher felt this was the key question the County Board needs to consider. She noted that the Library Board is not in a position to raise revenue and they use whatever the County provides to them the best they can. She felt that the County Board should be considering Robinson's question.

Supervisor Kaye recalled that not too many years ago the Southwest Branch was remodeled, but what they are saying now is that they need more space and he encouraged Supervisors to come and check it out. He felt that closing the Branch is not appropriate in light of the money that has been spent on remodeling. All they are asking for is some room to operate and provide programs for the public.

Fewell stated that he still has had a hard time with \$300,000 sitting out there and \$900,000 in bonding sitting out there and saying that we are not going to do anything with the Central Library because there will be a domino effect and it will cost more than they want to spend and they would not have enough to spend. He felt that as long as there is money set aside for the Library, it should be used for the expansion instead of taking money out of the general fund reserves which could affect the bond rating of the County as well as have other consequences, especially when possibly by the end of the year the money will need to be spent. Fewell does not want to see the money spent by making quick decisions just because the money has to be spent to avoid being put in some bond jeopardy. He struggles with why some of the bond funds would not be used for the expansion if there are not plans to spend the money by the end of the year anyway.

Motion made by Supervisor Schadewald, seconded by Supervisor Jamir to approve. Vote taken.
MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

Department of Administration:

- 1a. **Initial Resolution Authorizing the Issuance of Approximately \$2,970,000 General Obligation Airport Improvement Refunding Bonds of Brown County, Wisconsin.**

Motion made by Supervisor Schadewald, seconded by Supervisor Jamir to approve. Vote taken.
MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

- 1b. **Initial Resolution Authorizing the Issuance of Approximately \$3,775,000 General Obligation Corporate Purpose Refunding Bonds of Brown County, Wisconsin.**

Motion made by Supervisor Blom, seconded by Supervisor Jamir to approve. Vote taken. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

Other:

2. **Such other matters as authorized by law. *None.***

3. Adjourn.

**Motion made by Supervisor Blom, seconded by Supervisor Jamir to adjourn at 6:57 pm. Vote taken.
MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**

Respectfully submitted,

Therese Giannunzio
Recording Secretary